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TAGS: KPAO OPRC KMDR PREL

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; US POLICY ON CUBA; NEW TECHNOLOGIES;  
07/27/07

#### 11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's most important international stories cover current and future US policy on Cuba; and the agreement reached by US Senator Nicholas Negroponte and Intel corporation to work together on the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) project.

#### 12. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

##### - "The missing conversation"

Hinde Pomeraniec, international columnist of leading "Clarin," opines (07/27) "A few days ago, OAS Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza recognized that the time has already come to sit to talk with Cubans and said how 'absurd' the isolation policy is, something US businessmen increasingly oppose based on the fact that the embargo prevents them from doing profitable business.

"The self-criticism made by Raul Castro yesterday had already been hinted by Fidel himself in an article he wrote while sick in bed.

"Political transition has already begun and economic transition seems to be on its way. The many left wingers of the region foresee the same need for partners not patrons. Cuba is not the exception and for doing business there is nothing like sitting to talk in the first place."

##### - "Nothing would change with a Democrat in power"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (07/27) "No one seems willing to take the first step in the US-Cuban relationship.

"According to the US, Havana will have to produce more consistent evidence of democratic opening, although Republicans and Democrats do not yield in their defense of the embargo imposed on the island.

"At least in appearance, Democrats are considered as more conciliating with Cuba than the Bush administration and the G.O.P., although doubts prevail whether the Castro brothers could do better if the (Democratic) opposition takes power in 2009.

"This was made clear in last Tuesday's debate among Democratic pre-candidates, which was organized by CNN and YouTube. The question was 'Would you be willing to meet, without any previous conditions, during the first year of your government, with the leaders of Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba and North Korea to try to build a bridge over the points of disagreement with them?'

"The answers showed that opening a dialogue will depend on multiple variables and also on previous conditions.

"Senator Barack Obama, who runs second in opinion polls for the nomination of his party, said that he was willing to negotiate - 'The notion that not talking to other countries is in a way a punishment, which has been a basic principle of this administration, is ridicule.'

"For her part, Senator Hillary Clinton explained that she would send 'many high-ranking delegates to test the waters,' but 'certainly, we will not have our president meeting with Fidel Castro or Hugo Chavez or the presidents of North Korea, Iran and Syria until we know better in what way we could advance.'

"John Edward also conditioned a dialogue. He said that he would not want to be used as a 'tool of propaganda' by Chavez or other leaders."

- "Access to new technologies"

Leading "Clarín" editorializes (07/27) "New technologies have radically changed access to information and the way multiple practices are performed, such as the production of knowledge and trade. Computers and Internet give possibilities that were unthinkable in the past..."

"... In this scenario, the announcement made by One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) (in which Senator Nicholas Negroponte participates) that it is ready to start manufacturing a low-cost mobile computer model to bridge the technological gap is auspicious. Intel corp. has backed this initiative. Argentine authorities backed the OLPC initiative and we hope that it will soon allow students and teachers to access technological breakthroughs."

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